

VZCZCXRO9522
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHROV
DE RUEHC #2962 0932251
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 032233Z APR 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY 2343
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 2202
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY 0448
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3289
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 3782
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0532
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY 7821
RUEHSL/AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA PRIORITY 9019
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 4891
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 0153
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 1247
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 5561

UNCLAS STATE 032962

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL SY

SUBJECT: SYRIAN NATIONAL DAY ATTENDANCE

REF: STATE 20919

¶1. (SBU) Posts receiving invitations to receptions for Syria's April 17 National Day are authorized to attend at the deputy chief of mission level or below. In any substantive discussion of U.S. policy toward Syria, posts are authorized to draw from reftel points. This is a one-time authorization.

¶2. (SBU) Since 2005, the Department has maintained extremely limited official contact with Syria, a designated state sponsor of terrorism. President Obama and Secretary Clinton have committed to sustained and principled engagement with Syria to advance shared goals and address key concerns. On February 26, NEA Acting Assistant Secretary Jeffrey Feltman met Syrian Ambassador Imad Mustapha in Washington. On March 7, Feltman and NSC Senior Director for the Near East and North Africa Daniel Shapiro met Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallim in Damascus. In the wake of these initial contacts, Syria has taken limited positive steps, including naming an ambassador to Lebanon, dispatching Muallim to Baghdad to meet Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, and agreeing to reopen the American Language Center in Damascus. As additional engagement proves fruitful, the Department will undertake a broader review of its policy on official contact with Syria.

¶3. (SBU) Please contact NEA Syria desk officer Allison Monz with questions or for further guidance.

CLINTON